New England
Deaconess
Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

pulse

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Messengers keep hospital on the move

Sol Henderson, wheels patient across Pilgrim Road.

The patient is apprehensive, and understandably so. Today is radiation therapy day; the routine is familiar. He sat quietly on the edge of the bed knowing that soon a messenger would arrive to help him into the wheelchair. The wheelchair ride – that would be the best part of the day. Moving swiftly and surely through the labyrinth of corridors, in and out of elevators, negotiating the endless stream of hospital people hurrying to unknown destinations.

The patients knew all the messengers by now. Wearing their light blue shirts they talked to him about last night's Bruins game, the weather, or just shared some of their experiences. They never seemed to mind that he was unable to respond. They were never impatient with him.

Transporting or escorting patients within the hospital is a duty of the hospital's messengers, and when asked what they like best about the job, most reply that it is the patient contact, the feeling that comes from frequent opportunity to contribute to the care of our patients.

"What I really appreciate about the job is meeting the patients," says Seth Salinger. "I look forward to it."

Messenger Service is responsible for several other important functions including providing an orderly flow of medical records from the nursing units to the medical record department, delivering blood components to the nursing units, distributing supplies from the materials center and hourly routine rounds. But patient contact is obviously the most valued part of the job.

"We help people, that's what we're here for," says Gordon McKissack, adding that the messengers "are good people to work with."

A messenger's life is never idle. In an average day, dispatcher Steve Savilonis fields 235 requests for messenger service. Of these, 82 are for wheelchair escorts, 14 for stretcher transport, 63 for lab runs and 47 for miscellaneous errands.

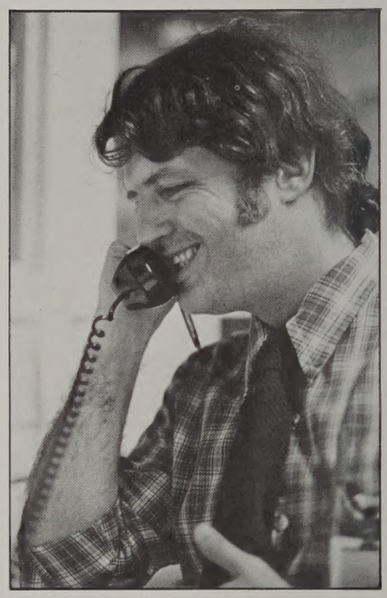
There are currently 11 full and part-time messengers Monday thru Friday and 7 on weekends, who according to Barry Lischinsky, materials management distribution manager, are doing "a really first-rate job."

"With the same number of messengers, we're handling 12 percent more calls than last year," he says.

This increase will be even greater this year due to an extension of messenger service coverage until 10:00 p.m. on weekdays, a change that took place October 16.

"By analyzing the density of calls during different parts of the day, we were able to anticipate busy periods and adjust our scheduling accordingly. In addition, we were able to add extra responsibilities, such as medical records rounds, blood deliveries and supply distribution, without increasing our manpower. It goes without saying that this reflects admirably on the messengers themselves," he added.

Mr. Lischinsky, with the support and cooperation of the messengers, has cut down response time by an average of over 50 percent. Response time on pharmacy errands, for example, has been cut by 72 percent. He adds that those using the messenger service could help cut down this response time even further by scheduling their requests well in advance. The total number of errands done during fiscal '77-'78 excluding flower and supply deliveries, was 56,122.



Steve Savilonis

Renovations bring dialysis unit, vascular lab to Deaconess 2

Renovations proceed apace in the Deaconess building. One new service has been added, while others have moved or expanded to meet current patient needs.

New here is the Vascular Lab, which opened in early November on the north end of the Deaconess. At present the lab performs two series of tests using non-invasive techniques. Evaluation of blood flow through the carotid arteries to the head and evaluation of blood flow to the legs is conducted using three primary methods. Sound waves are bounced off red cells to measure circulation velocity, blood pressure is measured at various points on the legs, and in a method known as oculoplethysmography, contact lens-like cups are placed on the eyes and light sensitive clips on the ear lobes to measure time differential of patient's pulse reaching the receptors. All these methods are designed to detect blockages in the peripheral vascular system.

Also on Deac 2 north are new quarters for Physical Therapy; the department moved in mid-November. Next to it the Pulmonary Function Lab has picked up some badly needed additional space.

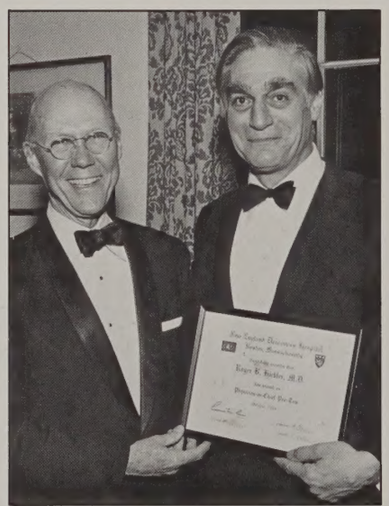
Endoscopy recently moved to the mid-section of the floor, across from chemotherapy which will remain at its present location.

On Deac 2 south, a new dialysis unit will occupy space formerly occupied primarily by Podiatry and Physical Therapy. Podiatry will move to space on Deaconess 1 currently used by materials management as a distribution center. This center will move to the Deaconess basement.

When the materials management distribution center moves to the Deaconess basement, it will occupy the area formerly used by medical records. This filing and storage facility has been relocated to the old radiation therapy treatment area in the Farr sub-basement. Work on the south end of both floors is scheduled to begin around the first of the year with a tentative completion date in June.

The Pilgrim Road bridge project connecting Farr 4 to Harris Hall 3 is proceeding on schedule. The bridge is designed to permit relocation of the clinical teaching classroom from Deaconess 3 to Harris 3 and connect the new residents' quarters, soon to be constructed on Harris 4, with the patient floors. The vacated space on Deaconess 3 will be renovated to accommodate the cardiac catherization lab which will move from Farr 5 allowing the option of adding two more operating rooms on that floor.

Diane Klinec, RN, together with other members of the dialysis unit nursing staff, wields a sledge hammer against wall in space recently vacated by physical therapy on December 2. The dialysis unit now on Palmer 2, is moving into expanded quarters here as soon as renovations are complete.



Dr. James L. Tullis, Chairman of the Department of Medicine presents award to Dr. Roger B. Hickler, who served as Visiting Physician-in-Chief Pro-Tem for the week of October 30, 1978. The award was made at a dinner in honor of Dr. Hickler held at The Country Club in Brookline, November 1.

FROM THE DEACONESS ARCHIVES: *A contemporary postcard shows the original 50-bed hospital as it appeared soon after its construction in 1907.*

Alumnae Profile: Elizabeth Beckmann

Elizabeth Beckmann

"The past two years have been the best of my life," says School of Nursing graduate Elizabeth Vandemoer Beckmann (class of 1973) about her Peace Corps experience in Colombia. Originally interested in joining VISTA to do nursing in rural areas of the United States, Elizabeth was urged by the federal government to enter the Peace Corps so that her nursing expertise could benefit Colombian hospitals. "I was surprised at the Peace Corps offer because I thought I'd have to have a degree and some teaching experience," says Elizabeth. After a three-day Peace Corps orientation in Miami, she flew to Bogota for a three-month in-country training session, which included intensive classes of Spanish and Colombian culture.

Mrs. Beckmann's tour of duty started on January 11, 1976 when she was placed in charge of the operating room in the 500-bed regional hospital in Bogota. As supervisor, Elizabeth set up and organized the operating room suite, formulated rules and policies, and instructed nurses in operating and recovery room procedures.

"At first it was difficult because some Colombians felt resentment at having an American come in to supervise the OR," says Mrs. Beckmann. "The language barrier was also difficult to surmount. But at least we had had a 10-week crash course in Spanish and I have a facility for learning language."

In addition to her hospital duties, Elizabeth also went to rural areas as assistant to a Colombian physician, Enrique Beckmann. Now, as Mrs. Enrique Beckmann, Elizabeth recalls how important these journies into impoverished areas were.

"The people had no sanitation, scorpions crawled everywhere, malnutrition and sickness were rampant. Frequently an old farmhouse served as a health center." Mrs. Beckmann is quick to point out the importance of the psychological component in the treatment of disease. "Even though people had specific physical complaints," she says, "it was a psychological relief for them to come to professional people and pour out their anxiety and frustration. Our listening was definitely therapeutic for them."

After her marriage Mrs. Beckmann transferred to University Hospital, also in Bogota, to become supervisor of their four-bed intensive care unit. Surprised at the modern quality of the equipment and the staff's expertise in its use, Elizabeth was able to increase their know-how further by writing an ICU manual detailing 40 specific procedures and advising technicians on the care of the machinery.

In comparing her nursing experiences in the United States and Colombia, Mrs. Beckmann finds that "things are not run strictly by the book and are more humane and easygoing in Colombia." She also notes that Colombian health care teams rely more on their senses and instincts than their American counterparts do. She stresses that in the United States it's all too easy to forget that "there's a human being there under all the tubes." Mrs. Beckmann's culture shock upon returning to the U.S. centered around the depersonalization she feels characterizes a mass society. She was also overwhelmed by what she termed our "tremendous waste of materials."

Mrs. Beckmann chose not to complete her two-year Peace Corps stint. Instead she chose to accompany her husband to Chicago where he began a residency in Pathology at Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center. The couple arrived at O'Hare airport three days after the January 1978 blizzard hit the windy city. The Beckmanns plan to remain in Chicago for two more years after which Dr. Beckmann would like to do research in immunology at Massachusetts General. Currently assistant head nurse in the intensive care unit at Michael Reese, Elizabeth is delighted at the prospect of returning to native turf and would like to continue her nursing career at the Deaconess. "It would be the first and only place I'd apply in Boston" she says. Elizabeth views the Deaconess as a "well-rounded hospital offering many learning opportunities, continually expanding its nursing horizons."

Upon her graduation from the School of Nursing in 1973, Elizabeth worked for three years at Goddard Memorial Hospital in Stoughton, Ma. She spent one year in the OR as circulating nurse, one and a half years in the special care unit, and one-half year rotating between the emergency room and coronary care.

The Beckmanns plan to return to Colombia for a month-long vacation this January. Elizabeth promises us an update on her Colombian experience in a future PULSE.

Alumnae notations

Mabel Hurley, '27 . . . "retired as Director of Nursing Services but work part-time as assistant administrator at Westboro Nursing Home."

Eleanor Lundgren Heilman, '37 . . . "help with blood pressure clinics in LaGrange, New York. My husband 'Judge' John retired from the bench last May. We expect to spent part of the winter in Palm Beach. Children and grandchildren are all busy and well. I had knee surgery last winter and am still on crutches."

Martha Roberts Paige, '54 . . . "doctor I have worked with for 16 years has closed his practice to join Project Hope in Jamaica. I am now working with the doctor who reopened the same office."

Anne Olsen Wood, '55 . . . "graduated from Springfield College with a BS in psychology and sociology."

Constance Dougherty Johnson, '55 . . . "still working for Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Handicapped Children's Services. I cover 105 cities and towns in southeast Massachusetts as consultant to schools on Chapter 766. Am also nurse therapist at Mental Health Center. Completed Family Nurse Practitioner at Worcester Hahnemann in December, 1977."

Joan McLain Newcomb, '59 . . . "have returned to school at the local college in Kingston, Ontario as a part-time student in Behavioral Science Technology. Our children are all in their teens now and life is never dull. Anyone visiting the Thousand Island area is welcome here. It is beautiful except for so much snow for too long a time."

Nancy Smith Howard, '61 . . . "am now coordinator of Health and Sex Education at the Cushing School and Training Center in Hanover. Am also doing work in the community as a sex educator."

Sandra McKay, '65 . . . "am active in the Orthopedic Nurses' Association and still at New England Baptist in the Orthopedic Department."

Deirdre Hickey, '67 . . . "am pursuing a BSN via outreach program of the University of New Hampshire. Am Director of nursing services at a small rural hospital and have bought a 100-year-old-home."

Martha Gordon Pontes, '67 . . . "just received my BSN with honors from Boston State College."

Mary M. Weideman, '71 . . . "received a BA in chemistry last June from the University of Illinois, Chicago, and now am a graduate student in biochemistry at Michigan State University.

Alice Brown, '72 . . . "in October began my first term as a missionary, teaching Bible and Health at Oro Bible College with the American Advent Mission Society in the Philippine Islands.

Lorraine Rhodes Fournier, '72 . . . "daughter Kendra is now 1½ years old. I am working in a Critical Care Fluoroscopy Unit.

Alumnae News Briefs

BIRTHS

Roberta A. Kac, '69, first child, Henry Michael, born September 13, 1978.

Martha Toothaker Souza, '69, first child, Elizbeth Ann, born September 19, 1978.

Joan Heustis Jones, '71, second daughter, Rebecca, born June 22, 1978.

SYMPATHY

Virgie King Dahlquist, '28, on the death of her husband in September, 1978.

Elizabeth Baker Horan, '29, on the death of her husband, Thomas, in June and son, Peter in October.

DEATHS

Dorothy Mock den Harder, '31, in September, 1978. Mrs. den Harder died while vacationing in Helena, Montana. Her home was in Lakewood, California.

Linda Hill Baer, '62, in April, 1978.

Virginia Diggdon, '40, retired from the Deaconess staff September 11. She served as student health clinic nurse since 1959 and is pictured above at her retirement party held in the Harris Hall Living Room. As is her tradition, Muriel Lund has just given Miss Diggdon a teapot and box of tea bags. Miss Howland, center, joins in the fun.

Tenth annual Alumnae Day draws large crowd

The Tenth Annual Alumnae Reunion Day was held November 4 in Audrey K. Kennedy Hall. A coffee hour from 9 to 9:30 a.m. opened the festivities for the 180 alumnae who gathered from states as far away as Florida. A business meeting followed the coffee hour. After the officers' reports were read and approved, the following alumnae were unanimously elected to serve as officers for the 1978-79 year:

President – Carol Livingston
Vice President – Lois Schultz
Treasurer – Priscilla Archibald
Assistant Treasurer – Elizabeth Dunbar
Recording Secretary – Rhonda Crocker
Corresponding Secretary – Shirley Baldwin

New directors include Phyllis Giardini, Lois Preston, and Glenny Jackson. Miss Ellen Howland, Director of the School of Nursing, was appointed honorary board member.

Alumnae Phyllis Giardinia and Lois Schultz, delegates to the American Nurses Association convention in Hawaii, showed slides and detailed the main events of the convention sessions.

Following the business meeting the alumnae met at the Harvard Club for luncheon and talks delivered by Mr. Laurens MacLure, President of the hospital, and Miss Howland.

Miss Howland brought the alumnae up to date on the subject of licensure as it pertains to diploma schools. At present it appears that legislation will be introduced to change the present nurse practice act. If so, diploma schools will be endangered. It is the position of New England Deaconess Hospital, Miss Howland said, that "diploma education should remain a viable option for applicants."

With regard to next year's Alumnae Day, President Carol Livingston wishes to remind all School of Nursing graduates that the cost of the 1979 festivities will be $10, which includes morning refreshments, busing to the Harvard Club and luncheon. All interested alumnae should contact Mrs. Livingston at 18 Ortins Road, Hamilton, MA 01936, (617) 468-1847

Old newspaper clippings bring memories and smiles to School of Nursing Alumnae. From left is Sharma Kinney Colford, '56, Joan Randle, assistant director of the school, Ellen Howland, '45 and director of the school, and Jean Marshman Dickerson, '47, Elizabeth Dunbar, '61, and Rhonda Crocker, '72.

Registering at start of Alumnae Day are (l.-r.) Evelyn Griffin, '48, Janie Christie Chapman, '42, and Barbara Broadbent Corey, '48.

Waiting for the start of the day's activities are (l.-r.) Martha Muzzy Spaulding, '52, Barbara Colby, '49, and Gertrude Snoen MacKay, '35.

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The New England Deaconess Hospital is a 489-bed and 14-building complex. Physicians from the Joslin Clinic, the Lahey Clinic, Overholt Thoracic Clinic and the general medical and surgical staffs serve the needs of their patients at the hospital. The Deaconess is internationally known for diagnosis, treatment and research in brain and chest surgery, cancer, diabetes and general medicine, and is affiliated with Harvard Medical School.

PULSE is published monthly by the public relations department of the New England Deaconess Hospital.

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Elizabeth Beckmann, '73, talks about her experiences in Columbia in this issue's Alumnae Profile. See Page 3.

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